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Approved For Release 2004/01/16 : CIA-RDP75-00149R000500440014-7

YORK PA.
 GAZETTE & DAILY

MORNING 36,869

SEP 18 1962

SAME OLD NIXON

Richard Nixon entered political life shortly after the second world war with a slanderous campaign in California against Democratic Congressman Jerry Voorhis. He plugged the same line later in his successful try for the U.S. Senate when he smeared an excellent legislator, Helen Gahagan Douglas. After eight years as Vice President the word went out—we're not quite sure who from—that there was a new political Nixon, one, we assume, who would no longer deal in half-truth, innuendo and deceit.

This was supposed to be the character of his campaign for the Presidency as the Republican nominee. And it is true that he did not make an effort to besmirch the person of his opponent, then Senator and now President John Kennedy, in the style he had used against Mr. Voorhis and Mrs. Douglas and later as an official Republican campaigner in various congressional and senatorial contests. Nonetheless, his recent book Six Crises, demonstrates that he was running true to form as far as the public was concerned. He attacked Mr. Kennedy vigorously for Mr. Kennedy's recommendation that the U.S. might have to intervene in Cuba. Mr. Nixon said, in effect, that such suggestions were shocking.

But all the while he knew full well as he tells in his book, that the CIA at the behest of the Eisenhower Administration was preparing an invasion of Cuba. For sheer hypocrisy this would be hard to beat in any Presidential campaign that comes to mind. What Mr. Nixon is saying in his book is that he lied in the interests of the Eisenhower Administration and at the same time attempted to make political capital out of the lie. And he wanted to be President.

Well, he didn't make it. So now he is back in California running for governor, aware, we are sure, that if he doesn't make this one he is finished politically. So after some months of jumping from one foot to the other over a period of months on the issue of accepting support from the John Birch Society and other such nitwit groups, Mr. Nixon has finally reverted to the trick that made him famous. He is letting it be known that his rival, Governor Pat Brown, is soft-on-communism and he promises that if he, Richard Nixon, is elected, he will make California the number one anti-communist state in the nation. It is, from this far distance, laughable stuff. But it is not quite so funny when one reflects that Mr. Nixon has worked the game before and won with it.

So we shall see what we shall see in California. All we can say at the moment is that the Republicans ought to be mighty glad this fellow wasn't elected President on their ticket. There is no new Nixon and there never was, except in the concoctions of some public relations man who figured this was the way Mr. Nixon ought to sell his political soap in a national market. There is just the same old Nixon — opportunist, trickster, smear expert, baloney slicer. It won't save the country if he is defeated in California. But it'll help.